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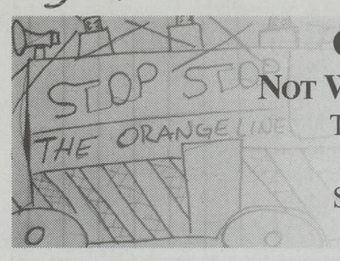
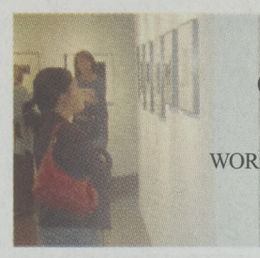


OPINION PG. 2
NOT WORTH THE RIDE
THE ORANGE LINE'S FOCUS ON DESIGN SACRIFICED SAFETY.



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VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 64, ISSUE NO. 2 MARCH 1, 2006 IT'S *YOUR* NEWSPAPER

Valley Celebrates Black Heritage

BY WILL REYES
STAFF WRITER

Monarch Square was brought to life this past Wednesday by the colors, sounds and flavor of Black Heritage Day here at Valley College.

With dozens of tables set up featuring items ranging from soul food and barbeque to African-American art quilts, jewelry and more, the aura of a celebration of a rich culture and history was in the air.

The event, which was organized by the Associated Student Union and the Black Student Union, was hosted by BSU Advisor Tara Lake and featured a speech by Bill Ellis of the Tuskegee Airmen, poetry and spoken word, as well as a celebration of African-American musical history.

"This was a phenomenal group effort," said ASU Advisor Dr. Sherri Rodriguez. "It was very festive … we hope to do this again."

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR

AS THE BEAT GOES ON- Valley College beats its drums at the Black Heritage Celebration full of crafts, food, music and interesting people on Feb. 22. Artistic director of Khaley Nguewel Traditional West African Dance and Drum Troupe, Aziz Faye, is seen here with a traditional Senegal drum.

Opening with a speech by Ellis, a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen, who were the first African-American military aviators and piloted planes during World War II, was a stark reminder of the importance of black people in America's history.

At a time when military policies included the belief that black people couldn't learn to fly planes, Ellis and his fellow pilots took to the skies for America and became famous for never losing a bomber to enemy fire.

Following the speech was a presentation of poetry and spoken word, as well as a moving performance of The Black National Anthem by Valley Student Jamaceo Black. With the backdrop of the struggles black people have overcome laid out, the mood was set for the musical celebration to begin.

"We're here to celebrate the culture of African-American heritage, but not all of it, because there is so much," Lake told the crowd.

The celebration continued with historical introductions to the various genres of black music, from gospel and jazz to hip-hop and traditional African dance, highlighted by an extremely energetic dance and drum set by Aziz Faye and the Khaley Nguewel dance troupe.

The troupe began by playing intricate Senegalese forms of drumming for the audience, which included Valley President Dr. Tyree Wieder, and then called on crowd members to join them in dance, which had some shy students trying to hide.

"If we call on you to dance and you run away, you are taking the spirit away," Faye said. "So I'm pretty sure if you can dance, you can shake it!"

His enthusiasm for his work brought both laughs and dancers out of the crowd, including ASU President Nelli Martirosyan, who lined up at his side with other students and danced along to the booming drums.

"I loved the day and enjoyed it so much," Martirosyan said. "Everyone did a great job and the outcome was wonderful."

The celebration rounded out with another talented Valley student taking the microphone, as music major Sara Proctor sang both "Precious Lord" and "My Funny Valentine," and closed with the formation of a drum circle.

With such a large turnout, the day was widely considered a success.

" I was so proud to have the students, faculty and staff work together," said Lake. "[The event] was awesome."

Campus Cafeteria No Longer in the Red

BY SEDA TERZYAN
STAFF WRITER

The Valley College cafeteria is under new management after suffering losses of more than $600,000 in the past three years due to high union wages for employees and lack of sales.

Deli, Depot and More signed a 10-month contract with Valley College in September and has managed to reverse losses and turn out some profits. This is mainly due to the fact that Deli Depot privately runs the cafeteria, pays rent for the space, employs its own workforce, and brings in the necessary supplies and food. It also provides catering services for almost all school events, luncheons and meetings.

"We're doing things they just did not do before," said Marshall Wexler, president owner of the Deli, Depot and More. The Deli Depot staff is working hard to actually put improvements in to make progress. One of the improvements so far is that the cafeteria Valley Sidewalk Café are now accepting credit cards.

At the moment, work is being done to upgrade the coffee services at Valley and to bring in new venders. Prices of food in the cafeteria have been lowered to meet student budgets. Six-inch sandwiches are being sold for $2.99 a piece. A variety of foods are served, including freshly made sandwiches, pizza, soups, breakfast foods and even sushi.

Wexler not only plans to improve the quality of food served at the cafeteria and Sidewalk Café, he is also enthusiastic about creating an inviting atmosphere that will attract students to do more at the food courts than just eat and leave. He wants to put up posters, decorations and even play music. Wexler is passionate about his plans, being a Valley alumnus, he feels strongly about making significant changes and helping students become aware of the cafeteria.

The former cafeteria system was run by brand-name franchises called Hot Stuff Foods and Mean Gene's Burgers, which provided food and supplies and left all other responsibilities to the college. District employees were hired and were paid up to $15 an hour, plus full benefits, according to James Watson, contract manager for the district. This system did not leave much room for profiting and caused food prices to skyrocket. The new management is working hard to provide quality food at affordable prices.

"We have no losses now," said Watson. "We are profiting."

Though changes are being

see *'Cafeteria'* page 3

Orange Line's Safety Under Scrutiny

■ The Orange Line is involved in a crash across from Valley College, making eleven collisions in four months.

BY SEDA TERZYAN
STAFF WRITER

A Metro Orange Line bus collided with a car Feb. 18 injuring seven passengers, sending five to the hospital with minor injuries, when a car reportedly ran a red light and slammed into the bus at the Woodman and Oxnard intersection.

The bus was traveling eastbound on the busway leaving the Woodman stop when a motorist in a white BMW traveling southbound on hit the bus at approximately 4:30 p.m. Damages to the bus were minimal, but the motorist's car was totaled, according to reports, details of which have not yet been released.

This makes the eleventh crash the Orange Line has been involved in since its opening four months ago, all of which the LA Metropolitan Transportation Authority say were the fault of motorists who were inattentive while driving.

"There is only so much we could do to protect people from themselves," said Marc Littman, director of MTA public relations.

Many safety precautions have been implemented to ensure the safety of Orange Line riders and motorists according to the MTA. In November, after three collisions, the speed the buses traveled while crossing intersections was lowered to 10 mph from 25-30 mph, strobe lights, numerous signs and security cameras were installed at many intersections.

COURTESY OF MTA.NET

"We'll implement whatever we have to, to make this as safe as possible," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa at a news conference in November.

The Orange Line cost more than $300 million to build and operate and has exceeded expected rider-ship, according to MTA officials. More than 16,000 passengers ride the line each day, which is three times the ridership predicted, and the accidents have not had a negative impact. Rider-ship is expected to reach up to 22,000 passengers daily by 2020.

When comparing the Metro Orange Line's coverage of 100,000 miles per month to other buses that travel the same distance, 11 minor accidents in four months falls below the 3.5 accidents per month average. It is reported to be one of the safest bus lines because it travels in its own designated area and has tank-like strength, weighing in at about 30 tons.

"How much more can be done to prevent people from hitting a 60-foot bus rolling slowly through an intersection?" said Joel Bellman, press deputy for L.A. County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky.

Yaroslavsky came up with the Orange Line Concept, which cuts through the valley like a train on rubber wheels.

Critics of the Orange Line say that the MTA should have taken into account a similar bus way in Miami, in which dozens of people were injured and two were killed in 67 crashes between its opening in Feb. 1997 and its closing in Nov. 2000. Critics point out the similarity in the lines' awkward intersections that confuse drivers. Villaraigosa disregarded these claims and placed the blame for Orange Line accidents entirely on careless driving.

"We're not going to be deterred," said Villaraigosa. "This is a great line. It's a line that makes sense for people."

A recent study conducted by Berkeley University, commissioned by the LA Times, shows that a 3 percent traffic reduction has taken place on the 101 freeway as a result of the Orange Line, while a survey of 1,300 riders revealed that 36 percent of all passengers had access to cars and other forms of transit but found the Orange Line to be the fastest and 77 percent previously drove on the Ventura Freeway.

Students receive a discount to ride The Orange Line at $3 for a day pass and $30 for a monthly pass.

VALLEY PEOPLE

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

SPEAKING OF FROGS - Valley College forensic competitor Rachel Resnick won first place for her speech on the scientific uses of frogs at last weekend's Spring Championship.

Valley Student Earns Place in National Competition

BY TAMMY FUNICELLO
EDITOR IN CHIEF

This past weekend Valley College speech team member Rachel Resnick won first place in the open persuasive speaking competition, which made her the first person at Valley to ever qualify for the Interstate Oratory competition.

"It didn't hit me until yesterday," said Resnick. "I thought just breaking into the semi-finals was amazing, but then when they announced that I had one first place I wanted to cry because I was in shock. It was just so surreal that it didn't sink in."

The Interstate Oratory competition is the oldest and one of the most prestigious competitions for persuasive speaking since only two college and university students from every state qualify each year. Resnick, 21, is a communications studies major who is taking 18 units at CSUN and nine units at Valley. She also works about 15 hours a week at her family's sushi restaurant.

Resnick is only in her second year of competition and started by taking a speech 101 class.

"The second she spoke in front of the class I knew she

see *'Speech'* page 3

OPINION

WE'RE NOT PSYCHIC

So tell us what's on your mind! Contact The Valley Star at thevalleystar@yahoo.com, drop by the newsroom at BJ114 or call us at (818) 947-2576. Letters should be limited to 300 words and may be edited for publication.

Orange Line Swerves into Trouble

■ Bus safety remains at level orange.

BY MARCO ELORREAGA
STAFF WRITER

Welcome to the San Fernando Valley where we strive for ideals.

We have the ideal worker standing by Home Depot early in the morning with his or her Protestant work ethic at hand. We have the ideal courteous driver on the 405 freeway, free of any distractions. And now we have the ideal mass transit system known as the Metro Orange Line, "the Valley's newest shortcut," which makes "rush hour" no longer an ironic term.

So, why did it take accidents upon accidents to wake up Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to the safety issues concerning the Orange Line?

Because the problem with ideals is that one usually forgets about a thing called reality.

The Metro Orange Line opened to great hype, which normally means it will do great on its opening weekend and lose half its audience by the second.

Since its opening, the 14-mile bus line has been in several accidents, most recently just two weeks ago.

From the beginning, critics called the bus line a hazard because it didn't contain crossing gates and the intersections were too confusing.

With a $330-million budget, safety was sacrificed for design — plain and simple.

A 2005 study by Crossing to Safety Director Dr. Harvey A. Levine found that crossing gates are the safest type of warning devices to prevent accidents and casualties.

A report by The Federal Railroad Administration released in 2003 says that for every one accident that occurs at an intersection with crossing gates, eight and a half happen at intersections with only stop signs.

Although the Orange Line is far from a train in speed and size, crossing gates would help to enforce the red lights that are being ignored. Crossing gates for any public transportation unit should be the primary choice in warning devices because the statistics show its promise: The casualties-per-crossing have declined 56 percent from 1975 to 2004 as construction for crossing gates have increased.

An alternative to crossing gates that would help spruce up safety would be the planned installation of red light cameras. In a survey conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, there has been a 92 percent decline in red light violations in Los Angeles at intersections that have the cameras.

The Orange Line fails in safety because it assumes that drivers believe in the right of way.

Most drivers don't.

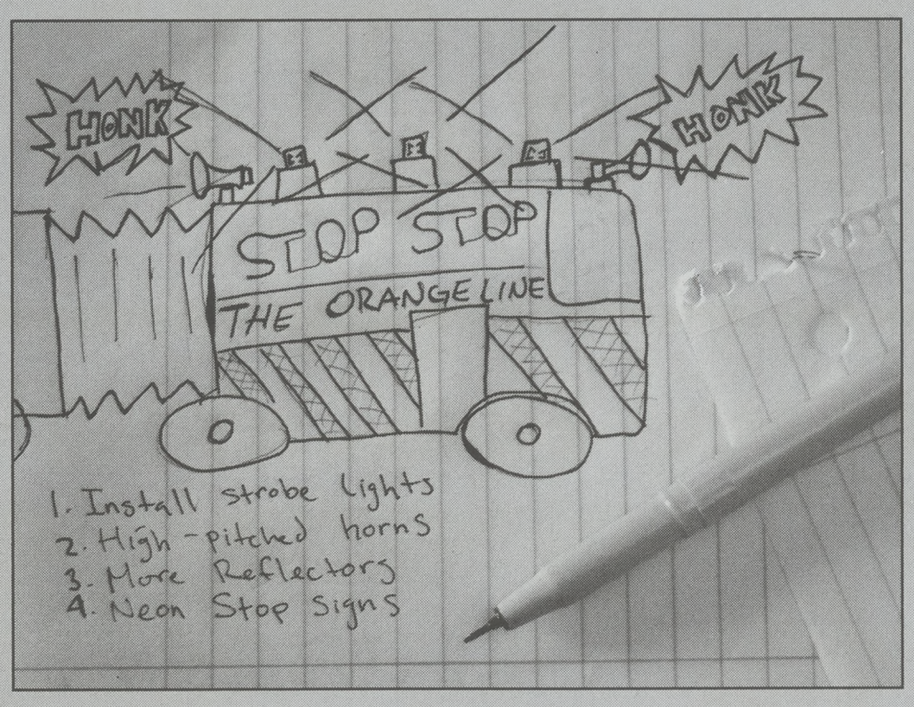

ILLUSTRATION BY JESUS ESQUIVEL / VALLEY STAR

BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD - New safety ideas to ensure the visibility of the accident prone Orange Line buses.

Whether the bus looked like a discotheque or was actually painted Orange, there will always be someone trying to beat that red light or too occupied with his or her Bluetooth. Knowing the pace of public works in L.A., it might be a while before anyone sees any change in the bus' safety features.

With the success of the Orange Line, Mayor Villaraigosa continues to advocate public transportation with his proposed "Subway to the Sea" next on his agenda. The $5-billion project is expected to take 15 years to complete, but if the Orange Line is any indication of what to expect, we have been warned.

Campus View

What do you think about The Orange Line?

PHOTOS BY DANIEL KANE

"It's a stupid idea, it's crashed like nine times, no I don't think it's safe."

-Ashlay Dickerson

"I like it, it's fast, safe and clean. It cut my travel time by about 30 minutes."

-Lilibeth Castaneda

"It's the dumb drivers from the Valley who always run the red light on Fulton; they makes the buses unsafe."

-Daniel Heiss

"It's nice to have a straight road to school; you don't have to worry about parking, or getting stuck in traffic."

-Gladys Nyoth

Olympics Go for Downhill Record

■ The Winter Olympics leave many viewers out in the cold.

BY DANIEL SROURIAN
STAFF WRITER

The 2006 Winter Olympics kicked off Feb. 6 in the beautiful, snow-covered city of Torino and showcased the world's brightest young stars competing in several different sports, ranging from hockey to curling.

However, when TV ratings were released for the first week of coverage, revealing that NBC, which airs prime-time Olympic coverage, stood at a solid third place behind FOX and CBS, critics were shocked to see that the Olympics had lost the prestige it once had with American viewers.

Or were they really?

Was anybody really surprised by the fact that these Winter Games, which take place every four years, did not automatically capture Americans' hearts and have them talking about it the next morning inside their cubicles?

The problem there would be that in order for someone to watch the Olympics live, they probably would not make it to work the next day anyway, as the 10-hour time difference between Torino and the U.S. has left the Winter Olympics out in the cold.

The choices given for viewing: either stay awake from midnight to 3 a.m. to get the live coverage and experience the thrill of victory, or wait 10 hours, avoid anything about the Olympics on the Internet, avoid getting sucked into American Idol and watch the competition in prime-time, pretending to get excited when what you're really seeing is old news.

When we can get up to the second sports score updates on cell phones, and the slightest five second delays for the Super Bowl has us hollering at television stations about how we're being cheated, the notion by NBC to maintain outstanding ratings through programming on a 10-hour tape delay is actually quite ridiculous.

The 2006 Winter Games were about medal counts, marketing and money.

Prime-time viewership for the first six nights of the Winter Games was down 36 percent from Salt Lake City in 2002, 17 percent from Nagano in 1998 and 44 percent from Lillehammer in 1994, according to USA Today.

Try explaining that one to your corporate sponsors, to whom you promised the entire 18-49 demographic group.

So besides the fact that people are not generally watching the games live, how come the marquee sports event known as the Olympics is possibly being overlooked by millions of Americans to the likes of Simon Cowell?

Some claim it to be a lack of appealing sports. The International Olympic Committee responded to this and added youth-oriented sports such as snowboarding in the 1998 Nagano Games.

How does NBC expect to attract the young generation when it is airing the games at 1 a.m.?

Bryant Gumbel, host of the HBO show "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel," recently went on the air and tried to blame the ratings deficit on the lack of black athletes in the Olympics.

"Count me among those who don't care about them and won't watch them," said Gumbel. "So try not to laugh when someone says these are the world's greatest athletes, despite a paucity of blacks that makes the Winter Games look like a GOP convention."

That makes as much sense as me proclaiming that I don't watch the NBA because there are too many black athletes, which is actually quite absurd.

Race has never been an issue in the Olympics, as Shani Davis, an African-American, brought home gold for America in the 1,000-meter speed-skating competition.

Does that mean it became any less significant because there were no other African-Americans on the team?

The reality of the situation is this: The Olympics are supposed to showcase the future of sports, bringing together the best athletes of the world to display their talents to an international audience.

Yet, the 2006 Winter Games were about medal counts, marketing and money.

Pair that with the fact that prime-time coverage was on too late for the general viewing public, and what we had was a train-wreck for NBC and its sponsors.

Besides, American Idol is on.

All is Fair in Love and Nuclear Power

BY BRIAN DEAN
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Iran's nuclear program continues to worry the International Atomic Energy Agency along with the United Nations' Security Council.

Officials claim their nuclear ambitions are limited to civilian use; Iranian threats against Israel must put assertions of peaceful use of nuclear material in doubt.

But as a sovereign nation with a democratically elected president, Iran should enjoy the same right to self-determination as any nation of the world.

Enriched uranium, the centerpiece to nuclear power and nuclear weapons, remains the sticking point in negotiations between Iran and its neighbors Russia and China.

Russia has offered to provide Iran with uranium suitable for use in nuclear power plants in exchange for Iran's promise to not produce their own. China's role so far has been to encourage Iran to accept the solution. But why should Iran be forced to rely on other nations for vital resources, especially if the political will to provide such a resource can be turned off under the right conditions?

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad seems to be well aware of the world's opinion of Iran. Accordingly, he's reluctant to approve any deal that takes the power of Iran's prosperity out of Iranian hands.

Possibly taking a lesson from the ongoing 44-year United States embargo against Cuba, Ahmadinejad will not (and should not, as a responsible head of state) allow another nation to stand in the way of self-sufficiency.

"But they have oil," a popular argument goes. "Why do they need nuclear power with such vast proven oil reserves under their feet?"

Perhaps a better question would be "Why should they follow the West's example for oil consumption?" With the benefit of hindsight, Iran is able to better plan for future oil usage than the U.S. in its heyday of consuming homegrown oil.

With the ever-present question of peak oil combined with increasing worldwide demand, the value of Iran's oil reserves can only increase the longer it stays in the ground.

Of course it doesn't benefit the U.S. to keep the bulk of Iranian oil off the market, but it certainly does for Iran. Shouldn't they have the right to do what's strategically and economically important for their people?

As for the fear of secretly developing nuclear weapons, one only needs to look at the difference in handling the other members of the Axis of Evil.

Iraq, who was known to be without nuclear weapons was invaded, while North Korea, known to possess them, gets the courtesy of conversation. Obviously not blind to global politics, President Ahmadinejad may indeed want to acquire what it takes to prevent military action between the U.S.

At best, Iran is honest about its desire for civilian nuclear power. At worst, Iran is wiped off the map after having the audacity to initiate nuclear war. Unlikely though, if their goal is to be a self-sufficient nation.

Indies Open Oscars' Eyes

■ Academy Awards finally become hip to the power of indie films.

BY JESUS ESQUIVEL
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

It seems that the latest formula for a blockbuster is to dress a man as an overweight woman, slap a wig on him, add a few jokes and the end result will be a No. 1 at the box office.

Movies like those are made to be liked by thousands and are made for wide distribution by the major studios that produce them.

Perhaps it's because of all the garbage being produced by big studios that Academy members are finally becoming hip to the potency of indie films with sociological implications; thus the best picture nominees: "Brokeback Mountain," "Capote," "Good Night, and Good Luck," "Crash" and "Munich."

Four of the five films in the best picture category can be regarded as independent films; Steven Speilberg's Universal-funded "Munich" is the exception.

Though last year Alexander Payne's "Sideways" was an uplifting name to hear in the best picture category, it never stood a real chance against Goliaths like Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator," the whimsical "Finding Neverland," the audience favorite "Ray" and the category winner "Million Dollar Baby."

This year, the ratio of indie movies to major studio movies in the best picture category is the exact opposite.

"I think that's terrific that independent films are getting more and more mainstream press," said Dawn Hudson, executive director of Film Independent, the group involved with the Independent Spirit Awards, an award ceremony that commends independent films, in an interview with The Times.

She believes that major studio "films are designed to be released on 3,000 screens. Indie films are not. That is not the impetus for making them. It is a passion to tell the story."

A passion that movies such as "Big Mama's House 2" and the current No. 1 "Madea's Family Reunion" lack.

Coincidentally, three of the best picture nominees for the The Independent Spirit Awards are also nominated for the Academy Awards; "Brokeback Mountain," "Good Night, and Good Luck" and "Capote."

It doesn't seem difficult to imagine the difference in nominees for both awards to become identical in coming years for this category.

At the same time, four of the Spirit Awards nominees for best actor, Heath Ledger, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Terrence Howard and David Strathairn, are also up for Oscars.

However, the Spirit Awards have also nominated film-makers, movies and writers for films few have heard about.

"There are films that haven't received distribution that are nominated," Hudson said. "Our mission is to give new filmmakers access to the contacts they need to get their next films made and to get publicity for their films."

Like Miranda July, nominated in the best first feature and best first screenplay for "Me and You and Everyone We Know," Gregg Araki nominated in the best director category for "Mysterious Skin" and Felicity Huffman nominated for best female lead in "Transamerica."

Up until now the Academy Awards has been doing the opposite of the Spirit Awards, promoting movies that have popularity on their own. Keeping an eye out for new and mold-breaking talent such as they have done this year would be nice to see in future award ceremonies.

'Cafeteria'

continued from page 1

made, most students are still unhappy with the cafeteria, while others are too traumatized by past experiences to go back.

"Eww … it's gross, it's vomit," said psychology major Kim Andrade. She finds the sandwiches to be dry and hates sitting in the cafeteria. The Sidewalk Café is first choice for food on campus for most students, even though it only serves quick snacks to go.

Many students say there is still not good food services on campus.

"I have to leave my parking spot and go out to get some decent food," said Tatevik Vardanyan, women's studies major. "And options at the cafeteria are limited for healthy eaters like myself, who prefer carrot juice over carbonated beverages."

Though some students still want to see improvements, some already do.

Joseph Hernandez is a Valley student who thinks that the food is better than it was before. He says that there are many food options to choose from and that the prices are agreeable.

"I haven't heard any complaints about the food, or the prices," said Raul Gonzalez, assistant vice president of administrative services. According to Gonzalez the owner is constantly checking the food and visiting the cafeteria to confer with students and get their opinions about the service.

The contract Deli, Depot and More has with Valley College ends on Aug. 31. After that Valley will extend the contract on a month- to- month basis with either Deli, Depot and More or new bidders. When the owner was asked about his plans concerning the cafeteria, he said, "We're not running away any time soon."

'Speech'

continued from page 1

was special," said speech 101 instructor Duane Smith. "She's got incredible charisma and self confidence."

She has already competed in the national tournament for community colleges, Phi Rho Pi, and won three bronze medals there for her speeches in persuasive and poetry interpretation. She also competed in the PSCFA Dick Strong Spring Championship held at Valley this past weekend where she qualified for the Interstate Tournament with a persuasive speech about the lack of fire safety and regulations at nursing homes, which will be held on April 21 and 22 in Pensacola, Fla. All the qualifiers speeches will be published.

"None of this would have happened if Duane Smith hadn't pulled me out of his 101 class," said Resnick.

This is Resnick's second and final semester on the speech team at Valley. Next year she will be a full time student at CSUN and hopes to be on their speech team. After she graduates in spring of 2007 she hopes to go to graduate school and someday become a community college speech teacher.

"Any student at Valley can achieve greatness, said speech coach Josh Miller. "With hard work and dedication you can be great and she proves that. She works hard."

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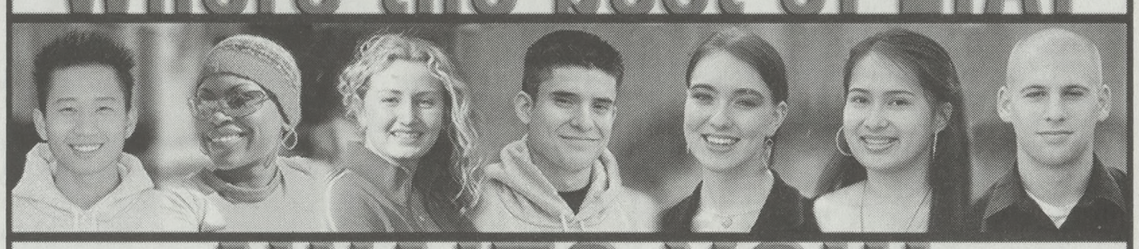

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WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, March 1

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The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising
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through April 29, 2006
Admission is free,
(213) 624-1200
www.fidm.edu

Thursday, March 2

Movie Festival
Presented by the International Students Club in the cafeteria conference room at Valley College.
8 a.m. "Flightplan"
10 a.m "Cinderella Man"
12 p.m. "Waiting"
2 p.m. "Napoleon Dynamite"
4 p.m. "Wedding Crashers"
6 p.m. "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou"
Free Soda and Popcorn

Friday, March 3

Movie Releases:
"Night Watch" (R)
"16 Blocks" (PG-13)
"Joyeux Noël" (R)
"Aquamarine" (PG)
"Block Party" (R)
"Ultraviolet" (PG-13)

Saturday, March 4

Kiran Ahluwalia
Harold M. Auditorium
Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr., L.A.
8 p.m. Free Admission
Reservation Required
(310) 440-7300

Sunday, March 5

The 78th Annual Academy Awards
5 p.m. PST
ABC

Monday, March 6

The Hollywood Hootch Burlesque Show plus, The Martini Kings
No Cover
8 p.m. 21+
The Derby
4500 Los Feliz Blvd., Hollywood
(323)663-8979

Tuesday, March 7

DVD Releases:
"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" (PG-13)
"Howl's Moving Castle (PG)
The Brady Bunch: 5th Season (NR)
"Traffic: Criterion Collection" (R)

Gallery Features Classic Photographs

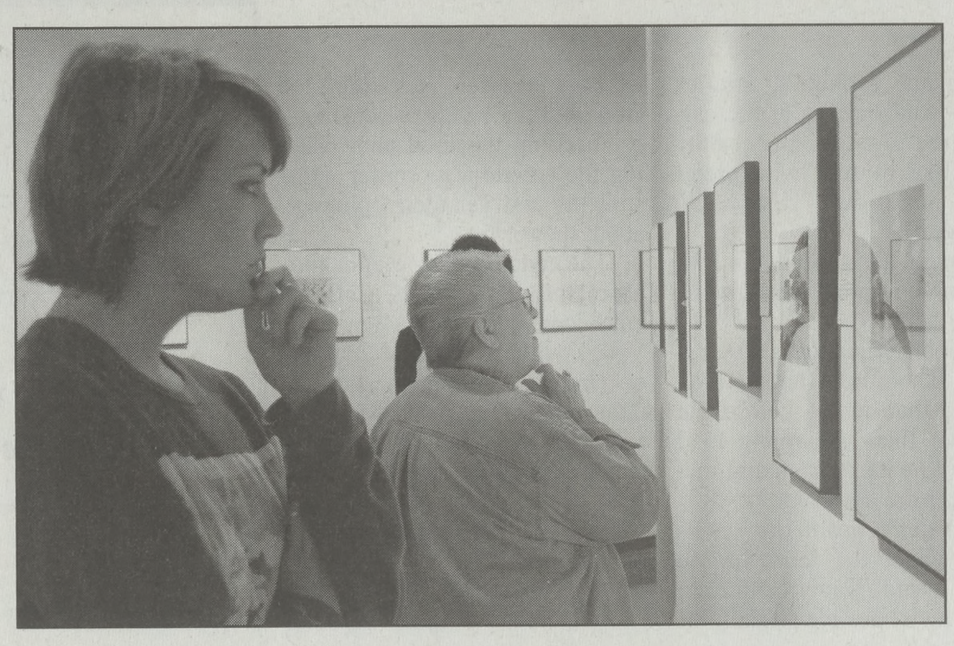
■ A new photography exhibit paying homage to classic photography opens at Valley College.

BY MARC HOWARD
STAFF WRITER

With digital photography and Photoshop manipulated images becoming more prevalent, "Perceptions: Bay Area Photography, 1945-1960," is a toast to not only the work of a group of phenomenal photographers, but also to pictures done the old-fashioned way.

All of the images in the exhibit, showing in the Valley College art galley in the art building through March 30, were produced long before the present era of digital image-making. The show is a tribute to an exhibition of work by some of the world's most well-recognized photographers held in 1954 called "Perceptions: a Photographic Showing from San Francisco," and includes the work of 28 of the 46 photographers whose work was included in the original show, including Ansel Adams, Minor White, Imogen Cunningham and Edward Weston.

"This exhibition celebrates a group of photographers that includes some of the best-known and finest to ever work in California," said Dennis Reed, Valley's dean of arts.



DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

CHIN SCRATCH - Art fans take in classic photographs from "Perceptions: Bay Area Photography, 1945-1960" at the Valley College art gallery.

The opening reception for the show, held last Wednesday, was attended by Merg Ross and Dodi Weston Thompson who contributed work to both the 1954 show and the present one. Thompson, former assistant to Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, founded Aperture Magazine and was the lead organizer of the 1954 show. She spoke to a packed lecture hall in the art building about her origins as a photographer, how the original show came about and about working with the great photographers she has known in her life.

The quality of photographs in the exhibit reflect the rare talent of the technicians who shot them.

Pirkle Jones' "Figure in the Rain" gives you the chills when you look at the windswept dresses of the women in overcoats and the umbrellas dotted with beads of rain.

A ghostly feeling is lent to Larry Colwell's "Dancers" by the blurred movement of the dancers; some of them seem to be at two places at one time.

You feel sympathy or pity when you look at John Bertolino's "The Girl on the Bench." You can't help but wonder what has happened to the woman or what she's feeling as she sits almost doubled over on that bench, leaning over on a small suitcase, her face covered, head rested in the crook of her arm.

Provocative images such as these are representative of a daily life in a bygone era. The show presents a rare opportunity to view these photographs firsthand; an opportunity that should be taken advantage of.

Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The exhibit ends March 30.

Valley Concert Series Kicks Off With Tchaikovsky

BY GREG KANDAHARIAN
STAFF WRITER

More than 60 people sat in complete silence listening to the sounds of lament from the Victor Trio Thursday morning inside the Recital Hall at Valley College.

This concert was the first of a series to be held every Thursday morning this semester at Valley.

Violinist Judith Aller, cellist Manon Robertshaw and pianist Jenna Voloshyn, who form the Trio, performed a piece by Pyotr Tchaikovsky in front of a crowd vastly made up of seniors, Valley students and faculty. Dressed in black, the three ladies dazzled the crowd with their three-part rendition as they plucked, stroked, and pounded away at their instruments.

"We're trying to get a nice mix of music," said Christian Nova, series organizer. "We've filled the hall before and hope to do so again this semester."

Students from Music 111, the music appreciation class, and a group of a dozen seniors became regulars last semester.

The music department funds the concerts, but the faculty is pushing for additional funding from the ASU, with which Nova believes Valley can lure more talented musicians, such as violinist Judith Aller who prefaced this semester's first performance with a 20-minute introduction revealing her emotions toward the piece.

She then showed those feelings while performing in her animate and masterful play of the violin, hardly containing herself to her seat.

"This piece is very close to my heart," said Aller. "I hope you enjoy it."

The passion and skill of these professionals is on stage every Thursday in Valley's music building for students to take advantage of. Upcoming concerts include jazz pieces, performances by students from UCLA and more classical numbers.

Faculty members urge students to email concerts@lavc.edu to join the mailing list.

ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

THE VICTOR TRIO - Judith Aller, Jenna Voloshyn and Manon Robertshaw perform works by Pyotr Tchaikowsky as part of Valley College's Thursday concert series.

And The Winner Is...

■ A look at the top runners in the Oscar race to air March 5.

BY MARCO ELORREAGA
STAFF WRITER

In its seventy-eighth year, the Academy Awards bring new light on films that deserve recognition, but only one will garner the ultimate prize. Out of the five best picture nominations, Ang Lee's "Brokeback Mountain" is leading the pack with wins in the Golden Globes and all major critic circles.

But don't rule out the other films. The Academy Awards is known for its upsets, like the 1998 awards when "Shakespeare in Love" beat out the Golden Globe winner and critical favorite "Saving Private Ryan."

The other nominated films that pose a threat to Brokeback Mountain are George Clooney's "Good Night, and Good Luck," Paul Haggis' "Crash," Steven Spielberg's "Munich" and Bennett Miller's "Capote."

Following the tradition of last year's winner, "Million Dollar Baby," this year's films continue to have many social implications.

The best director nominations include Lee, who was nominated in 2000 for "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" and is favored in the race for his subtle and aesthetic depiction of love that holds no prejudices.

Clooney is nominated in three categories, including best director for his McCarthy-Era political thriller, and continues his Oscar momentum, which might be enough for him to become the next actor-turned-director to take home an Academy Award.

Haggis expertly orchestrates a great ensemble of actors to portray the diversity and racial tension of contemporary Los Angeles with the ease to which no storyteller can compare.

Spielberg knows more about the Academy Awards than any of the other contenders, but might go home empty-handed for that reason alone, although his empathetic approach to the Israeli and Palestinian conflict in "Munich" is something only he could accomplish.

The final contender, first-time director Miller, is most likely not going to take home the trophy, but is to credit for the powerful and uncanny portrayal of Truman Capote by Phillip Seymour Hoffman, who is the front runner in the best actor category.

The category is filled with power-house performances besides Hoffman's. Heath Ledger plays Ennis Del Mar, a struggling, closeted homosexual in 1963 Wyoming. The expressions on his anguish-ridden face are enough to give Ledger his first win. Joaquin Phoenix plays country star Johnny Cash with such passion that the late legend seems to be resurrected in Phoenix.

Although "Walk the Line" was deemed more of a performance movie and ended up with more technical nominations, Reese Witherspoon should take the statue for her heart-warming performance as Cash's love, June Carter.

Whoever wins this year, it has been a remarkable year in movies, where chances were taken and voices were heard, and hopefully it will continue.

From Valley to Paris

By LaGina Phillips
Managing Editor

How many times has your mind wandered during class, dreaming of a place you would rather be than a stuffy classroom, perhaps the top of the Eiffel Tower? That dream could become a reality.

Valley College is offering the experience of a lifetime with the "Summer in Paris" study abroad program. The home of The Eiffel Tower, The Mona Lisa and Chanel; Paris has much to offer.

"It is so important for young people to observe other cultures and become aware of the fact that there really is another way to do things besides how we do them here in the United States," said Program Leader Professor Dominique Merrill.

The City of Lights is known for its romantic ambience and rich culture and will act as the backdrop for this year's program that Valley is offering in conjunction with ACCENT International to send students to Paris for a month.

With hundreds of attractions, including the Louvre Museum, Le Lido cabaret and Jim Morrison's grave, there's something for everyone.

"The student experience is phenomenal," said Merrill. "It is so thrilling to see them progress in their ability to communicate but most of all to see their faces light up when they first get a look at the Champs-Elysees, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, the Mona Lisa in the Louvre Museum or one of the many castles we visit."

To apply, students must submit an application and a $250 payment before April 20, and will receive additional enrollment information, at which time another payment of $3,050 must be made. For more information, contact Merrill at (818) 947-2380 or merrildl@lavc.edu, or ACCENT at (800) 869-9291.

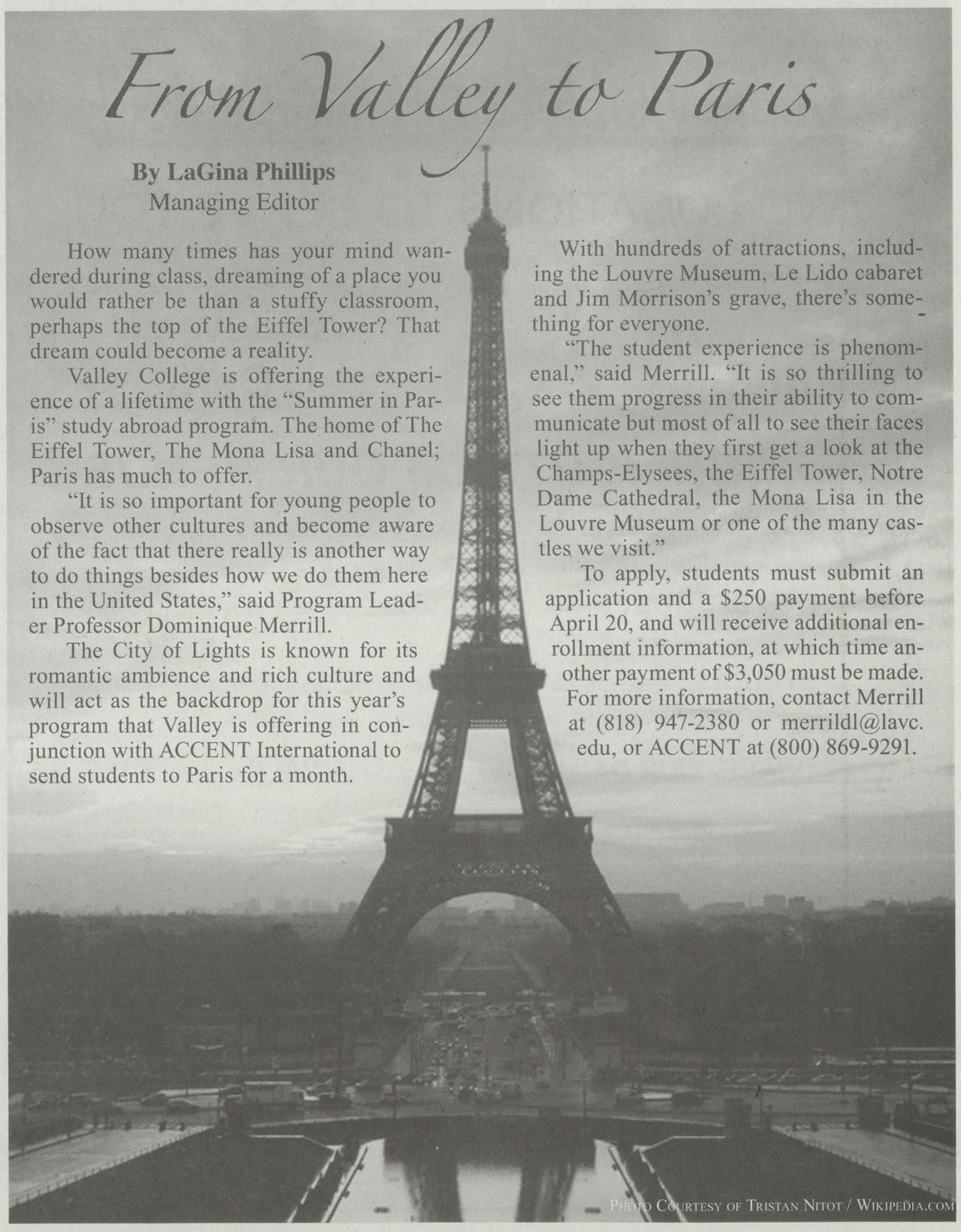
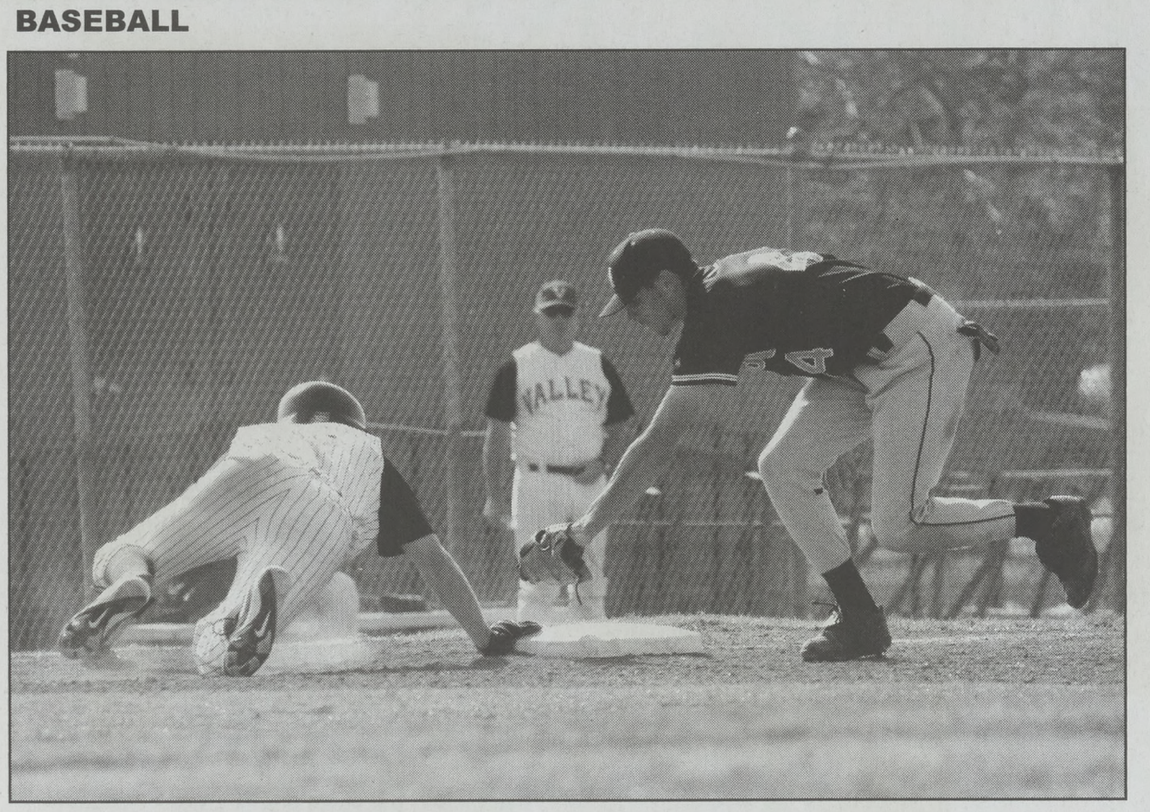


PHOTO COURTESY OF TRISTAN NITOT / WIKIPEDIA.COM

BASEBALL



ALEX FAYVIL / VALLEY STAR

BATTLING FOR EVERY INCH - Grant Bomann, #8, hangs on to third base as the Monarchs beat the Mission College Eagles by a score of 11-5 to improve to a 2-0 record. They will play their next game at home Thursday against Bakersfield at 2 p.m.

There's No "I" In This "Team"

■ Valley improves to 2-0 on season after 11-5 victory over Mission College.

BY NICK SANTONI
STAFF WRITER

The nucleus of last season's championship squad may no longer be seen on the Valley College baseball diamond. But this year's team contains new players eager to prove they can be just as successful. And after the Monarchs gave the Mission College Eagles a good 11-5 butt kicking Saturday, improving to 2-0 on the season, things look promising.

"We have become a close group," said third baseman Thomas Cassidy on the team's positive start. "We no longer have our MVP Eddie Baez, but we play team ball. This is what will keep this year's team a conference threat."

The Monarchs were able to demonstrate the "team" effort that they pride themselves on, but not before a shaky start.

Monarch starting pitcher Daniel Yaacobi had a bout of first inning nerves. He surrendered two runs after a walk and a couple of base hits. But the right-hander would settle down, shutting out Mission in the remaining four innings of his debut. Yaacobi pitched five innings to earn the victory, allowing two runs on just four hits.

"I didn't have my composure at the start," said Yaacobi, who ended up striking out three and walking two. "I got settled in after that, but it sure helps when the team starts hitting the way it did today."

And hit they did.

Valley had 15 hits after all was said and done. And they got to Mission's starter in the third. With one out and runners at the corners, clean-up hitting first baseman Jordan Sisson would double to right, driving in two and knotting the score at 2. To cap off the inning, right-fielder Leandro Dottavio doubled in Garrett Shimmamoto, and the Monarchs took a 4-2 lead. This would be the start of Valley's offensive onslaught.

"We have become a close group. We no longer have our MVP Eddie Baez, but we play team ball. This is what will keep this year's team a conference threat."

-Thomas Cassidy

The Monarchs scored two more runs in the fourth. The first coming on second baseman Chris Cervantes' first of two doubles on the day, and their second after shortstop Grant Boman singled in Cervantes. Valley's hitting became contagious.

Cassidy led off the Monarch fifth with a single to right, and then Sisson was hit by an inside pitch, putting runners on first and second with no outs. Next, Shimmamoto singled to right to drive in Cassidy. Mission yanked their struggling starter, turning to the bullpen for help. But, the results would be no different. Three consecutive hits off the mission reliever, an RBI line drive from Dottavio, a single by outfielder Ivan Gonzalez, and a double by Fernandez gave the Monarchs a 10-2 advantage.

Valley would score once more in the eighth Inning giving head coach Dave Mallas an opportunity to give pitchers John Henry Jacobs, Tae Kwon, Jordan Brandt, and Kevin Cohn each an inning on the rubber Jacobs would give up one run in the sixth, and Cohn two in the ninth, but it was too little too late for the Eagles

Mallas vows that if the team continues to play consistent and smart, they'll be in the same position they were in last year--atop the Western Conference.

"We're playing well from top to bottom," said Mallas. "We've been getting clutch hits, our defense remains strong, and our pitching always gives us a chance."

Then Mallas echoed Cassidy's sentiments. "It's always great to have a guy like a "Baez" on your team. But, I'd rather have a whole team playing hard than a couple guys putting up big numbers. Consistency is the key."

Valley will face Bakersfield at home Thursday, with the first pitch scheduled for 2 p.m.

Alumni Hall of Fame Will Honor the Green and Gold

■ Valley's rich sports history told in a thousand ways.

BY MAGGIE OWNBEY
OPINION EDITOR

Like a clear summer night sky, thousands of shining stars have illuminated Valley College's athletic department through the years.

Valley's new Athletic Hall of Fame will recognize and honor a roster of champions who first began to shine as part of the home team.

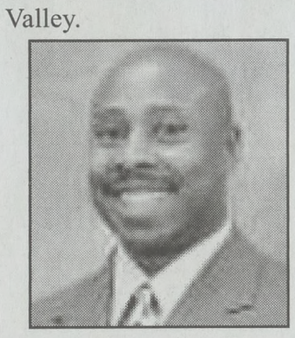
The hall of fame began as a dream of Valley's Athletic Director Chuck Ferrero, who saw a way to pay tribute to former players and inspire the athletes of today.

Ferrero took his idea to Patrons' Association Executive Director Raul Castillo, and with the athletic department and the Patron's Association on the same team the planning committee came together. The first annual inductee banquet ceremony is in the works for next spring and will include the unveiling of a newly commissioned mural in the fireside room, a collage of images that includes former athletes, coaches and newspaper headlines.

"It's a way to honor people [from] the past," said Dean of Administrative Services Brick Durley. "Valley has a great history of athletics going back 55 years."

Former Valley athletes include Olympic gold medalist Don McKenzie, former Los Angeles Raider Odis McKinney, former Los Angeles Dodger Bobo Castillo, Olympic volleyball player Gail Malone and former Washington Redskins Eric Yarber.

Yarber's story is unique; he played B football at Crenshaw High School and wasn't among the group of his friends recruited by Ferrero in the early 1980s, but he came along with them and went to school here at Valley.



ERIC YARBER

Yarber didn't play his first year at Valley, but he approached Ferrero before spring the next year and asked whether he could try out for the team the following season. Ferrero gave him a shot, telling him to "show me what you got."

From day one it was history; Yarber became a Community College All-American here at Valley and later in his career was drafted into the NFL and played three seasons with the Washington Redskins as a wide receiver and kick returner. In 1988 Yarber and the Redskins won the Super Bowl.

"Community college is a second chance, not just academically, but athletically," said Ferrero. "They might have been a little too small coming out of high school, might not have had the grades to go on to a university or their skill levels might not have been up, [but] they come in, do well, get signed and get an athletic scholarship.

"The ability to have them or people that they participated with in athletics be honored is another source of pride for the campus."

A March 18 barbecue to raise money and awareness for the development of the new Athletic Hall of Fame is scheduled. The group of dedicated team players that make up the Athletic Hall of Fame Committee, chaired by Paul Sabolic, who played football for Valley in 1965 and was a Community College All-American, will host the fundraising barbecue.

"This barbecue is the campaign kickoff for the Athletic Hall of Fame," said Castillo. "I'm hoping that many of the former athletes and coaches will attend to support the program financially and act as champions or advocates for the hall of fame."

Athletic Hall of Fame Barbecue and Campaign Kickoff
When: Saturday, March 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Where: in the Fireside Room
For more information contact:
Raul Castillo, Executive Director Patrons' Association
(818) 947-2618

SOFTBALL

MORRIS DE LA ROCA / VALLEY STAR

Reachin' - Valley College outfielder Brenda Paniagua, #35, lunges for home plate as Ventura College's Nicole Godina, #25, reaches for the throw that came too late in the game that saw the Lady Monarchs gain victory over the Ventura Pirates 7-4. The Lady Monarchs will play their next game Thursday, March 2 against Pierce at Valley at 2:30 p.m.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Softball
The softball team came back from a three run deficit to win 7-4 during last Thursday's home game against Ventura. Freshman Marissa Trujillo returned from an injury and batted .750 with three RBIs.

Swimming
The men's swim team lost to Cuesta 99-70 in their first meet of the season last Friday. Swimmer Mark Kramer won the 500 yard freestyle with a time of 5 minutes 13.9 seconds and came in second in the 200 freestyle with a time of 1 minute 56.5 seconds.
The women's team also lost to Cuesta 98-68 in their first meet of the season. Swimmer Caitlen Howison came in second in the 500 freestyle with a time of 6 minutes and 0.67 seconds and came in second in the 1000 yard freestyle with a time of 12 minutes and 13.5 seconds.

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GALLERY

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR

THEY'VE GOT SOUL - Valley students and staff members kept "Chef Marilyn's" catering crew busy, most going back for seconds and thirds.

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR

LET THE MUSIC MOVE YOU - Bentou Ly, from the Khaley Nguewel Traditional West African Dance and Drum Troupe, performed a traditional dance during Wednesday's Black Heritage Celebration at Monarch Square.

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR

AMERICAN HERO - Valley College went back in history with guest speaker Bill Ellis of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first all African-American military aviators that broke racial stereotypes and became famous for never losing a bomber to enemy fire.

Black Heritage Day Celebration

Photos by Maria Low and Daniel Kane

Valley College students and faculty were treated to a celebration of food, dance and culture last Wednesday at Monarch Square during the ASU and BSU-sponsored Black Heritage Day Celebration. Students joined the dances, lead by The Khaley Nguewel Traditional West African Dance and Drum Troupe that lended their talents to the celebration.

DANIEL KANE / VALLEY STAR

WORKING UP A SWEAT - Aziz Faye shows off his abs as he thrusts to the sounds of the Senegalese music.

MARIA LOW / VALLEY STAR

PRESIDENTIAL DANCE - Senegal dance Bentou Ly teaches Associate Student Union President Nelli Martirosyan and Students for Peace President Anitra Wetzel some new dance steps.